

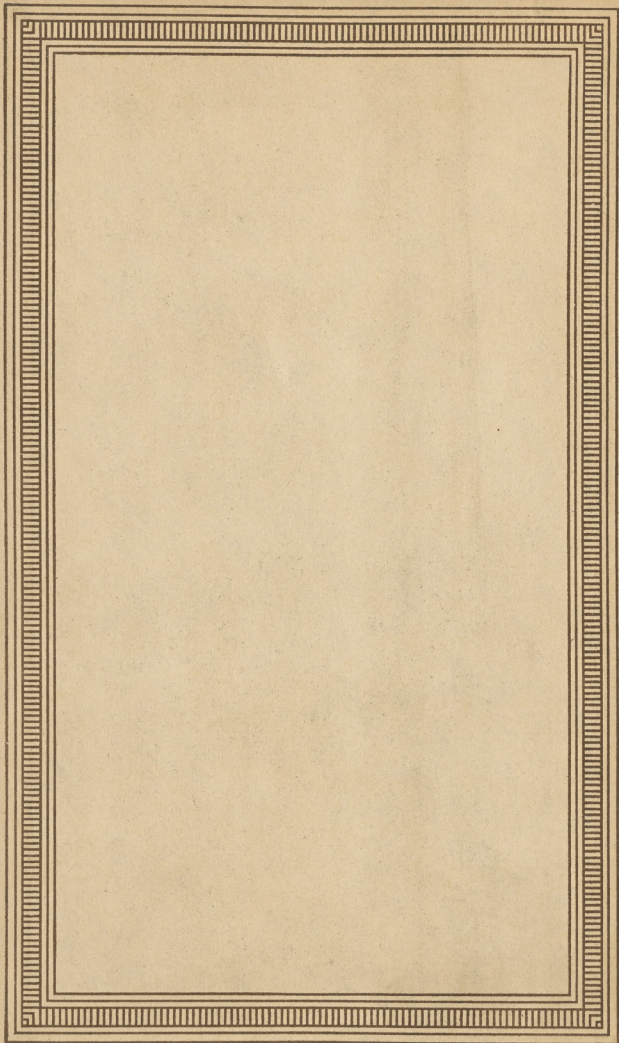
AT THE SIGN
OF THE
GOLDEN EAGLE

1810



1912





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Black, Starr and Frost

1810 • 1912



THE NEW BUILDING
FIFTH AVE & FORTY-EIGHTH ST.

AT THE SIGN
OF THE
GOLDEN EAGLE
1810 - 1912



Black, Starr and Frost
JEWELERS & SILVERSMITHS
Fifth Avenue and Forty-eighth Street
New York



AT THE SIGN OF THE GOLDEN
EAGLE

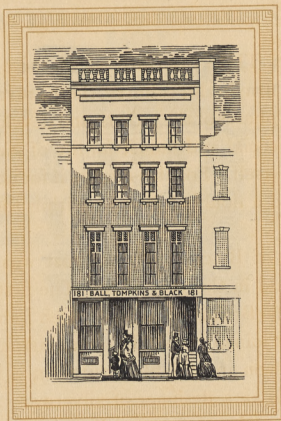
Published by Black, Starr & Frost, on the opening of their new building at Fifth Avenue and Forty-eighth Street. This book contains a description of the building and its various departments, together with a short history of this, the oldest jewelry house in America.

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MARQUAND & CO.
164 BROADWAY. 1810-1833

The building at 164 Broadway, where in 1810 Isaac Marquand founded what was destined to become one of the famous jewelry houses of the world. Here he was joined in partnership by Erastus Barton, and here it was that William Black and Henry Ball began their apprenticeship.



BALL, TOMPKINS & BLACK
181 BROADWAY. 1833-1848

In 1833 Marquand & Company moved to these larger quarters, when Henry Ball and William Black were taken into the firm. In 1839, when the Marquand family withdrew from the business, Mr. Ball and Mr. Black took in as a partner their cashier, Erastus O. Tompkins, changing the firm name to Ball, Tompkins & Black. This shop was the first in New York to have plate glass windows.

1810

ONE HUNDRED AND TWO YEARS

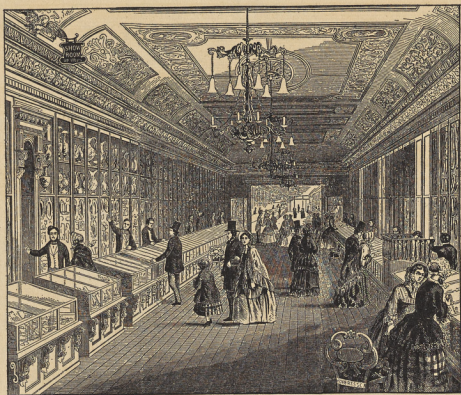
1912

IN THIS brief history of the oldest jewelry firm in this country, there are reflected many phases of the growth and development of the social and industrial life of New York City itself. For this reason, if for none other, the reader will find a doubled interest within the compass of its few pages.

The house of Black, Starr & Frost was founded by Isaac Marquand in the year 1810. The first store was a little shop at 166 Broadway, near Maiden Lane, where Mr. Marquand was joined by one Erastus Barton, an Englishman who had won an enviable reputation in both London and New York as a designer of silverware and jewelry.

The store itself was very small and unpretentious, as shops are considered nowadays, but it was located in what was then the most exclusive shopping district of the city, and its jewels and plate were of a quality which straightway gained for the firm a patronage of the most discriminating.

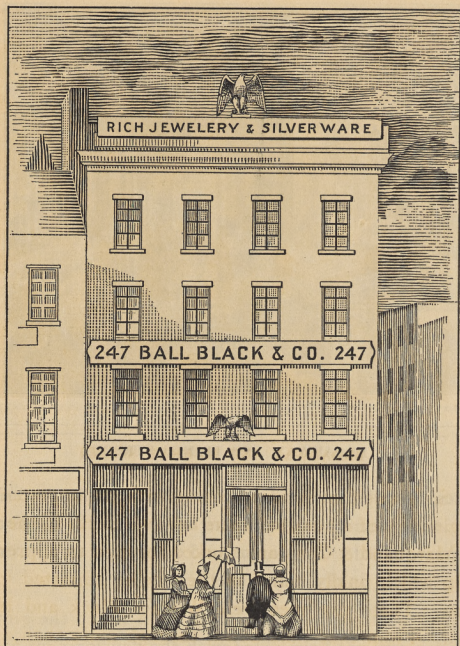
It is hard to realize that at this time the population of New York City was only 96,000—less than that of Albany or Hartford today—with stage-coaches and boats the only means of travel, and with the present busy neighborhood of upper Fifth Avenue nothing more than a green, wooded stretch of rolling countryside. It is hard simply because since then so vast a progress has been made within the space of a single century—a century through part of which all of us have lived.



BROADWAY AND MURRAY STREET

So it was that in true keeping with the unpretentious beginnings of a hundred years ago two clerks in the store of Marquand & Company worked through an apprenticeship which finally ended in their being admitted to the firm. These two men were William Black and Henry Ball. From that time down, through more than a century of progress, it has been their descendants who have carried on the work thus begun.

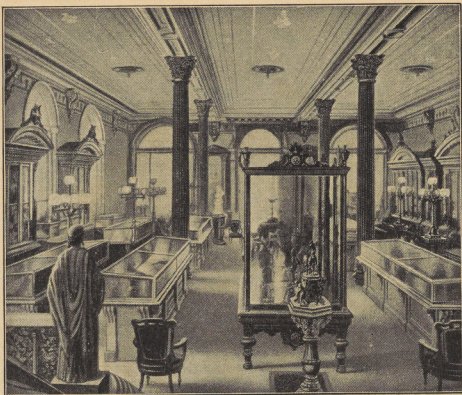
These succeeding generations have seen their business keeping pace with the growth of the city itself. They have seen the comparatively modest shop of the founder succeeded by a larger shop, and that by one still larger—until in 1860 the house—then Ball, Black & Company—stood as the most famous of its day, carrying on a business which not only included the whole of the United



BALL, BLACK & CO.

BROADWAY AND MURRAY STREET. 1848-1860

Erected by Ball, Tompkins & Black in 1858, to accommodate their increasing business, this building stood for years as one of the show places of New York. In 1851, upon the death of Mr. Tompkins, the firm became Ball, Black & Company.

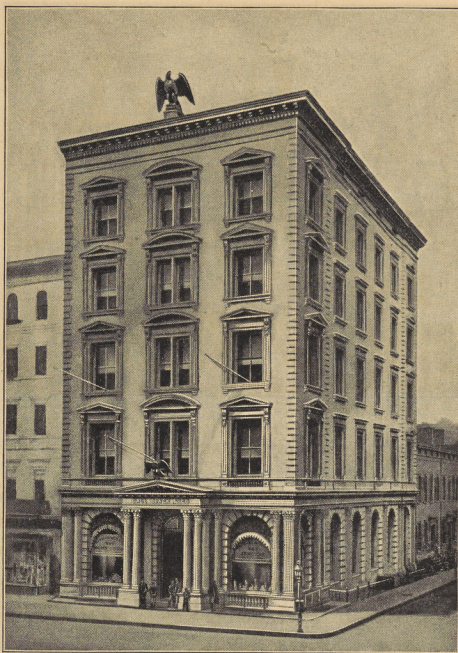


BROADWAY AND PRINCE STREET

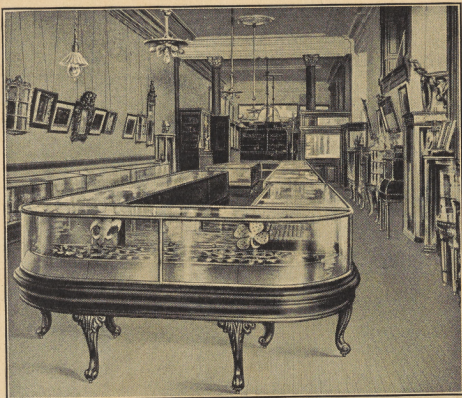
States, but which extended to England as well. And since that time there has been the same steady, consistent progress, based always on a rigid adherence to a business policy as old as the house itself.

It is interesting to note the way in which the growth of this house has been allied with the development of the social life of New York—how it has moved steadily northward as fashion and the pressure of business have decreed the relentless uptown march of the residential section from the Bowling Green of a hundred years ago to the upper Fifth Avenue of today.

By 1833 the social center of the city had moved as far north as Barclay Street. In this year Marquand & Company opened their Dey Street store. Then when society

**BALL, BLACK & CO.****BROADWAY AND PRINCE STREET. 1860-1876**

The finest business structure and most famous shop of its time; built by Ball, Black & Company, in 1860. This was the first fire-proof building in New York, being constructed of white marble, and in its vaults the modern safe deposit system was originated. It was specially inspected by the Prince of Wales on his visit to the United States, and is the scene of Thomas Nast's famous painting of the Seventh Regiment's departure for the Civil War.



FIFTH AVENUE AND TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET

had gradually established itself about the neighborhood of Bond Street and Lafayette Place, Ball, Tompkins & Black moved to their new shop at Murray Street. Again, as the residential center swept slowly up to Washington Square, Ball, Black & Company erected that famous white marble structure at Prince Street. The shops at Fifth Avenue and Twenty-eighth Street and Fifth Avenue and Thirty-ninth Street marked the social trend up that famous thoroughfare. And now that the more exclusive residential section of the city has crept still further up Fifth Avenue, the house of Black, Starr & Frost has followed with its new building at the corner of Forty-eighth Street. In each one of these moves there has been taken into consideration not only the best interests of the firm

**BLACK, STARR & FROST****FIFTH AVENUE AND TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET. 1876-1898**

Upon the retirement of the elder members of the firm, Robert C. Black, son of William Black, took in with him as partners Cortlandt Starr and Aaron V. Frost, all of whom had been through a long period of training with Ball, Black & Company. The firm now became Black, Starr & Frost. In 1876, striking out as pioneers in the uptown movement, they erected this new building, in what at that time was the social center of York City.

*Biding the time when you
honor us with a visit,
may we take you—in spirit
—on a trip through this
new building.*



THE NEW BUILDING
FIFTH AVENUE AND FORTY-EIGHTH STREET

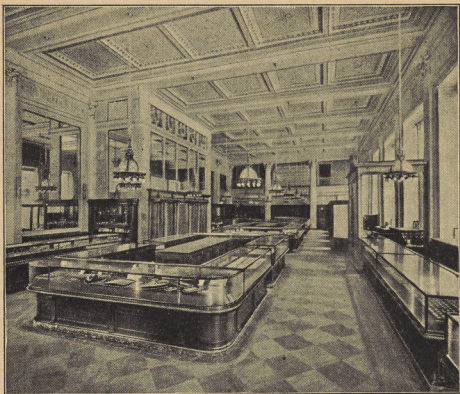
Now, in the Fall of 1912, the business has been moved to the new Black, Starr & Frost building at the southwest corner of Fifth Avenue and Forty-eighth Street. The building itself, designed by Carrère and Hastings, in the style of the Italian Renaissance, is considered by architects one of the handsomest business structures in the United States.

The new Black, Starr & Frost building was designed not only to meet the demands of a steadily increasing patronage, but also to meet those demands completely, in every conceivable way. The location was chosen for its dual convenience—to the more exclusive residential section and to the great hotels. The building itself was planned with the one aim of making it ideal for its purpose.

Every means was employed to build it secure from both fire and theft. Every modern device was utilized that would make shopping comfortable and expeditious. And no effort or expense was spared to produce in the structure an artistic monument thoroughly worthy of its location, of the house itself, and of the character of its patronage.

For this reason—because of the way in which the practical and the artistic were welded together in its conception—the new building of the house of Black, Starr & Frost will long hold a place as perhaps the finest example of commercial architecture in America.

The design of the building, inspired by a number of the finest *Palazzos* of Italy, reflects to a marked degree the dignity and grace of the Italian Renaissance. At first glance there seems to be a certain severity in the long vertical window-lines of the marble exterior, but it is an impression which vanishes immediately, for the whole effect is lightened and balanced by a delicate frieze treatment in bas-relief and by the rich modeling of the bronze-work framing the doorways.



FIRST FLOOR, NEW BUILDING

The interior of the building impresses one with the same atmosphere of restful dignity. The color scheme is worked out in a quiet, rich gray, and the whole effect is one of airiness and light, brought out to the most artistic advantage by the contrasting panelings and show cases of dark-grained African mahogany.

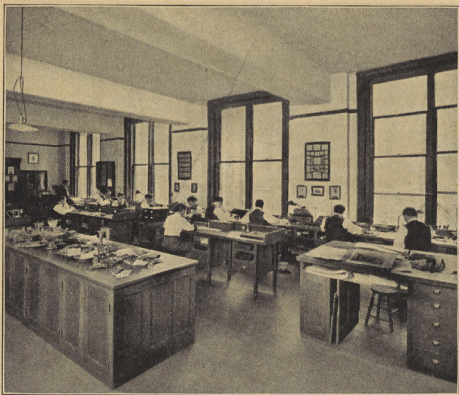
On the lower floor is the display of precious stones—one of the finest collections of gems in all the world—and on this same floor are the departments devoted to watches, small silverware, leather goods and stationery. The repair department is here too, just to the left of the Fifth Avenue entrance. The second floor is occupied by the main silver show room, and by the clock department. The upper stories are given over entirely to manufacturing and repairing.



SECOND FLOOR, NEW BUILDING

Throughout the whole building every possible provision has been made for the comfort and for the help of patrons. In order, for instance, that one may enjoy complete privacy in the inspection of precious stones and jewels, there are two special show rooms on the first floor, located near the Forty-eighth Street vestibule. There is also a dark room in the rear of the store, in which one may get the true effect of jewelry and gems under artificial light.

In the main silver show room on the second floor, where dining room silverware and loving cups are shown, there are specially designed cases and cabinets which make possible an adequate display of the individual pieces. Here again there are two private show rooms for persons considering the purchase of complete services. In

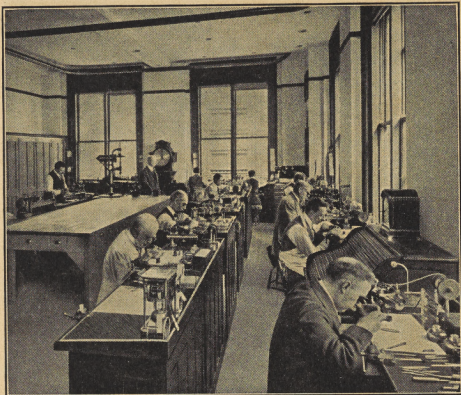


SILVER ENGRAVING SHOP

these rooms the services may be set out on dining tables, just as they would appear in actual use. In this way the different designs and period styles may be judged far more intelligently than would otherwise be possible.

Back of this silverware department is the display of clocks. Here are shown clocks of every description, large and small, simple and elaborate, clocks collected from every part of the world. And the prospective buyer does not have to make a choice from crowded display counters. A mantelpiece has been built into one of the walls—and on this mantelpiece any clock may be set, so that it may be judged with a due regard for its true effect.

In the stationery and leather goods department and in the watch department, with its comprehensive selection of movements and cases, the same attention has been

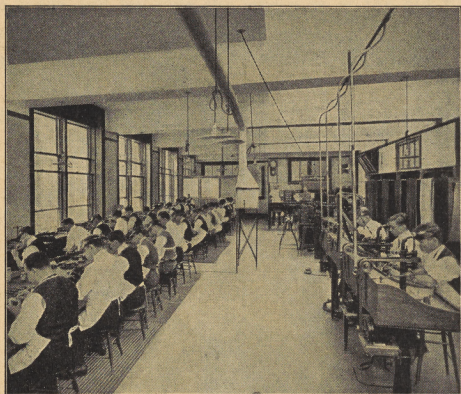


WATCH AND CLOCK SHOP

given to every little detail that would make shopping easier or in any way more satisfactory. And this same spirit is found in every part of the building—even to the luxurious furnishing of the ladies' retiring room on the first floor, which has its cozy, restful chairs, its writing tables, its telephones, and its maid.

Prompt and efficient attendance to the wants of patrons has been taken care of in many ways. Each department, for instance, has its own vault, situated within the limits of the department itself. This absolutely obviates any possibility of delay in securing any article that does not happen to be in display.

Each department, beyond this, is connected by telephone with all other departments. By a system of pneumatic tubes and special package elevators, each depart-

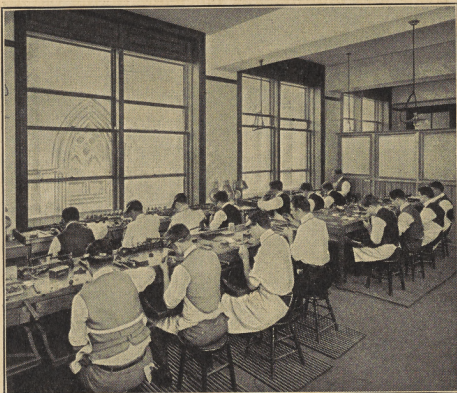


JEWELRY SHOP

ment is individually connected with the delivery department and with the manufacturing departments. By these means the annoyance of waiting is entirely done away with.

Then, to go further, it must be borne in mind that all work is done right in the building, in the manufacturing shops on the upper floors, under the constant supervision of the department heads and of the members of the firm. It means a good deal to realize that even the most precious gems may be entrusted to the firm, with the absolute assurance that they will not go out of the building, and that whatever work is to be done will be executed by men of skill and training, under strict personal direction.

Moving into the new building, which is larger than the other, has made it possible to increase the variety and



FINE JEWELRY AND DIAMOND SETTING

size of all our stocks. We have now, for instance, a handsomer collection of gems than ever before. Our connections with the great jewel marts of the world, which have been maintained through more than a century, give us exceptional opportunities for purchasing the most desirable specimens. Then, too, the fact that we manufacture all our settings, makes it possible for us to produce exclusive designs of a decidedly exceptional character.

Throughout all the departments will be found the same completeness and variety. In the displays of jewelry, of silverware, of watches and clocks, and of leather goods and stationery there is nothing lacking—in fact, each department is virtually as complete as if it were a store by itself.

By its location, by its size and by its carefully planned conveniences the new building has enabled us to broaden the scope and improve the efficiency of the old Black, Starr & Frost service. We must confess, however, and with some pride, that we have been able to find no way in which we could better the application of the century-old Black, Starr & Frost ideals of quality.



MISS HELEN W. AND DIAMOND SETTING

into all our stocks. We have now, for instance, a good
a vast collection of gems that have been
taken with the great level mine in the world, which have
been transmitted through more than a century, give us
a national reputation for purchasing the most desirable
gem specimens. I have not the fact that the diamonds
of our setting make it possible for us to produce
the diamonds of the world's experience.

The diamonds and other gemstones and minerals
of the Black & Company in 1891 and 1901 and 1911
the diamonds of the world's experience. The diamonds
of the world's experience. The diamonds of the world's
experience. The diamonds of the world's experience.



SERVICE OF PLATE PRESENTED TO MR. COLLINS.

Four-piece gold service designed and manufactured by Ball, Black & Company in 1851, and presented by the citizens of New York to Edward K. Collins, in honor of his having established the first American line of trans-Atlantic steamships. The metal in this service was taken from the newly discovered gold fields of California.



GOLD TEA SET EXHIBITED BY BALL, BLACK & CO. AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

Gold tea set of twenty-nine pieces, exhibited by Ball, Black & Company in 1851 at the Crystal Palace World's Exposition in London, and in 1853 at the New York Crystal Palace.

